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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE SHARE $500K GRUBER FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE PRIZE

Each Has Used Distinguished Career in Law as Foundation for Decades-Long Efforts That Have Dramatically Improved Human Rights on Several Continents.

June 12, 2008, New York, NY – The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation today announced that it will award its 2008 Justice Prize to two renowned advocates for human rights and justice though law:

Judge Thomas Buergenthal – a child of the Holocaust who became a world leader in the struggle for justice, he serves as the American judge on the International Court of Justice; co-authored the first international human rights law textbook in the United States; as judge and president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; helped end the practice of disappearances in Honduras; and helped secure the government of Guatemala's compliance with a Court order ending executions of human rights activists by special tribunals.

Jerome J. Shestack – former president of the American Bar Association who helped end the practice of disappearances in Argentina, Chile, and Brazil; helped marshal support to eliminate race and gender discrimination in the United States; successfully defended dissidents in the former Soviet Union and South Africa; organized protection for human rights advocates; and served as a mentor to a generation of human rights lawyers.

The Justice Prize will be awarded in a ceremony this fall celebrating the achievements of the recipients, who will share the $500,000 prize.

"I applaud the selection of Thomas Buergenthal and Jerome Shestack as Justice Prize recipients," said United States Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. "Throughout their distinguished careers, both have devoted their bright minds and brave hearts to repairing tears in their local communities, nation, and world. Justice, equal and accessible to all, has been their constant pursuit. They have strived to install and uphold the rule of law and respect for the humanity and dignity of all the world's people, however turbulent the times or the pressure to relent. Their courage and vigilance have inspired legions of jurists to follow in their way, to support and defend liberty and justice at home and abroad, whenever and wherever those hallmarks of civilized society are threatened."

Judge Thomas Buergenthal served as judge of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights from 1979 to 1991. He is the founder, former first president, and, since 1991, honorary president of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, which plays a premier role in human rights promotion, research, and education in Latin America. From 1992 to 1993, he was Commissioner of the United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador, which investigated the human rights violations committed in that country during its civil war. He was the first United States citizen (1995-99) to serve on the United Nations Human Rights Committee, where he contributed to improvement of the Committee's working methods. While chairman of the American

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Bar Association's Human Rights Committee, Judge Buergenthal successfully advocated for U.S. ratification of international human rights agreements. He was also the first full-time chairman (1997-2000) of the Committee on Conscience of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. A concentration camp inmate during the first decade of his life, Judge Buergenthal has campaigned against genocide and crimes against humanity in many parts of the world. A law professor and prolific author, he co-authored the first American law school course book on international human rights law, which led to the introduction of international human rights courses and seminars in American law schools. *(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)*

While U.S. Ambassador to the UN Commission on Human Rights, ***Jerome J. Shestack*** spearheaded the creation of a Working Group to address the practice of disappearances engaged in Argentina, Chile, and Brazil. He chaired the International League for Human Rights, and founded and chaired the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights (now Human Rights First), which helped rally world opinion on behalf of human rights through its missions to expose injustices and human rights abuses by the regimes of authoritarian and totalitarian rulers. While still a student at Harvard Law School, Shestack successfully launched a movement to have women admitted to the school. And, while on faculty at LSU in the early 1950s, he led a successful campaign to desegregate that school. As First Deputy City Solicitor of Philadelphia, his advocacy in the Pennsylvania appellate courts helped end segregation in swimming pools, bowling alleys, and places of public amusement. As chair of the American Bar Association's Section on Individual Rights, Shestack started the first ABA committees on women's rights, legal services to the poor, Native American rights, and international human rights. As president of the American Bar Association, he marshaled ABA support for the International Criminal Court, and other UN human rights treaties. Often referred to as the "Pied Piper of Human Rights," he has served as a mentor for a generation of lawyers in the United States and around the world. *(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)*

The Gruber Foundation Justice Prize is presented to individuals or organizations for contributions that have advanced the cause of justice as delivered through the legal system. The award is intended to acknowledge individual efforts, as well as to encourage further advancementsin the field and progress toward bringing about a fundamentally just world.

Additional Information

In addition to the cash award, recipients receive a medal of honor and a citation which reads:

The 2008 Justice Prize of the Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation is proudly presented to Jerome Shestack and Thomas Buergenthal, two human rights advocates who are pioneers in the fight for justice and human rights throughout the world.

They have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to creating a world in which both governments and citizens protect and honor individualized freedom and human dignity while vigilantly fighting against social injustice and human rights abuses.

Amid great challenges, Thomas Buergenthal and Jerome Shestack made tremendous and lasting contributions to creating a just rule of law and changing the landscape of human rights advocacy. Through their staunch advocacy, they influenced the thinking of government officials, policymakers, educational institutions, and the general public around the world, and brought these figures into the struggle for human rights.

Members of the committee that selected the 2008 Justice Prize Recipients:

- **Dennis Archer,** Dickinson Wright PLLC, past member of the Supreme Court of Michigan, past president of the American Bar Association
- **Giuseppe Bisconti,** Studio Legale Bisconti, former president of the International Bar Association
- **Arthur Chaskalson,** former head of the Constitutional Court of South Africa (retired)

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- **Param Cumaraswamy,** former president of the Malaysian Bar, former UN Rapporteur of the Independence of Judges and Lawyers
- **Bernice Donald,** US District Court, Western District of Tennessee
- **Martin Lee,** Office of Mr. Martin C.M. Lee, QC., SC

Past Honorees of the Gruber Foundation Justice Prize:

- **2007: Judge Carmen Argibay** of Argentina, **Judge Carlos Cerda** of Chile, and **Mónica Feria** of Peru. Judge Argibay has been a pioneering women's advocate, corruption foe, and participant at the Tokyo Tribunal to adjudicate charges of sexual slavery; Judge Cerda is an independent and courageous member of the Chilean judiciary who pursued Pinochet abuse while the dictator was in power; and Feria is an international lawyer, defender of children's rights and tireless champion of victims of the Fujimori prison massacre of 1992.
- **2006: Aharon Barak,** retired President of the Supreme Court of Israel, renowned for championing an activist judiciary and the rule of law and democracy.
- **2005:** Malaysian attorney **Dató Param Cumaraswamy** who, at considerable risk to himself, stood up for the independence of the judiciary.
- **2004: Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson,** the first president of South Africa's Constitutional Court, and **Deputy Chief Justice Pius Langa**, an advocate and judge who helped establish South Africa's Constitution as a model for modern democratic societies.
- **2003:** Canadian Supreme Court Justices **Madame Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella** and **Madame Justice Bertha Wilson** for their contributions to jurisprudence in Canada and beyond. Abella, who served on the Ontario Court of Appeal for 20 years before her appointment to the Supreme Court, is one of Canada's leading advocate for women's and human rights; Wilson, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada, has forged a reputation as a champion of the underdog and a dedicated proponent of fair play.
- **2002: Fali Sam Nariman,** Member of the Parliament of India, Senior Advocate in the Supreme Court of India and President of the Bar Association of India. Nariman has played an important role in both establishing and enforcing the rule of law in India. He's played an important role in establishing universal principles of human rights as a standard for India and other emerging democracies.
- **2001: The Honorable Justice Anthony Roy Gubbay,** former Chief Justice of Zimbabwe, and the **Law Society of Zimbabwe** were the joint recipients of the inaugural Justice Prize, honored for upholding the independence of the judiciary and protecting the rights of the people of Zimbabwe.

The Gruber International Prize Program honors contemporary individuals in the fields of Cosmology, Genetics, Neuroscience, Justice and Women's Rights, whose groundbreaking work provides new models that inspire and enable fundamental shifts in knowledge and culture. The Selection Advisory Boards choose individuals whose contributions in their respective fields advance our knowledge, potentially have a profound impact on our lives, and, in the case of the Justice and Women's Rights Prizes, demonstrate courage and commitment in the face of significant obstacles.

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The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation honors and encourages educational excellence, social justice and scientific achievements that better the human condition. For more information about Foundation guidelines and priorities, please go to: www.gruberprizes.org.

For more information on the Gruber Prizes email media@gruberprizes.org or contact Bernetia Akin of the Gruber Foundation at 340-775-8035 or by mail 140 W 57th St Suite 10C New York, NY 10019. Media materials and additional background information on the Gruber Prizes can be found at **our online newsroom:** http://www.gruberprizes.org/Press.php

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